

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SNM-02 AID-05 /018 W

----- 108247

R 241935Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6964

DEA HDQS WASHDC

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR MX

SUBJECT: FIELD TRIP TO CULIACAN: SPECTRAL DATA CORPORATION  
(SDC) MOPSS CONTRACTUAL SERVICES AND CAMPAIGN OPERATIONS

REF: MEXICO 10555

1. SUMMARY: SERIES OF MEETINGS WITH ZONE VI AG COORDINATOR (CHIHUAHUA, DURANGO, SINALOA) AND OTHER KEY OFFICERS SERVED INTENDED PURPOSE AS ALL CONTACTS WERE THOROUGHLY APPRISED ON EXTENT OF SDC MISSION. A VERBAL COMMITMENT WAS GIVEN BY ALL PRINCIPALS CONTACTED THAT THEY WOULD SUPPORT SDC/MOPSS AND UTILIZE THE END PRODUCT IN THE MOST EFFECTIVE MANNER. GERTZ; MANDATE, RELATIVE TO THE LATITUDE HE CONCEDED TO SDC IN THEIR MOPSS OPERATIONS, WAS UNDERSCORED DURING INDIVIDUAL AND JOINT DISCUSSIONS WITH THE AG COORDINATOR, CHIEF PILOT, AND MOPSS LIAISON

OFFICER. THE TARGET DATE FOR INITIATION OF MOPSS OPERATIONS IN CULIACAN WAS NOT STIPULATED AS THE SDC PROJECT MANAGER WAS UNABLE TO COMMIT HIMSELF DUE TO THE LACK OF A CONTRACT. NAU PROGRAM OFFICER JUDGES MOST REALISTIC TARGET DATE IS NOW MID-SEPTEMBER.  
END SUMMARY.

1. AS CITED IN REFTEL, PROGRAM OFFICER TRAVELED TO CULIACAN ACCOMPANIED BY SDC PROJECT MANAGER GUSS AND PHOTO NAVIGATOR SHAUGHNESSY. GERTZ, AS PROMISED,  
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THOROUGHLY COORDINATED THE VISIT TO CULIACAN AS REPRESENTA-

TIVES FROM THE FEDERAL PROSECUTING ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, MFJP, AND AG/MOPSS SUPERVISORS WERE AT THE AIRPORT TO MEET THE U.S. TEAM.

2. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT MEETING CONSISTED OF A 2-HOUR SESSION IN THE ZONE COORDINATOR'S OPERATION CENTER PRESIDED OVER BY FEDERAL PROSECUTING ATTORNEY (FPA) (AGENTE DE MINISTERIO PUBLICO) CARLOS AGUILAR GARZA. ADDITIONALLY, BOTH AG/MOPSS SUPERVISORS, QUINONEZ AND ZAPATA, PARTICIPATED ACTIVELY IN THE DISCUSSIONS. GUSS COVERED POINTS CITED IN REFTTEL THOROUGHLY. HE UNDERScoreD THEIR RESOLVE TO WORK THROUGH THEIR LIAISON OFFICER, SERGIO ZAPATA, WHO WAS SPECIFICALLY APPOINTED BY GERTZ AS A FULL-TIME LIAISON BETWEEN SDC AND THE COORDINATOR.

3. GUSS REITERATED THE SDC CONTRACT CONDITIONS AND THEIR COMMITMENT TO MEET ALL THE REQUIREMENTS; HOWEVER, HE EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING A CONTINUOUS TWO-WAY FLOW OF INFORMATION BETWEEN SDC AND THE COORDINATOR. PFA AGUILAR GARZA AGREED TO THIS. AN AGREEMENT WAS REACHED ON THE AREA TO BE PHOTOGRAPHED ON A TOP PRIORITY BASED ON RECON FLIGHTS AND RECENT REPORTS GLEANED FROM THE PILOTS WHO ARE FLYING MARIHUANA SPRAYING MISSIONS. THUS FAR, THERE ARE NO CONFIRMED REPORTS OF POPPY FIELDS IN THE SOUTHERN SECTOR REPEAT SOUTHERN SECTOR OF THE TRISTATE AREA (CHIHUAHUA, DURANGO, AND SINALOA, REFERRED TO AS ZONE VI BY THE AG OFFICE). SDC/MOPSS WILL WORK FROM NORTH TO SOUTH COMMENCING IN SOUTHERN CHIHUHUA AND NORTHERN SINALOA AREAS.

4. BOTH GUSS AND FPA AGUILAR CONCURRED ON THE TIMELY SUBMITTAL OF THE MOSAICS AS THE COORDINATOR PLANS TO MOBILIZE HIS SPRAY FORCES TO RESPOND IMMEDIATLY TO THE INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM SDC. GUSS EXPLAINED SDC'S FLEXIBLE POSTURE IN ORDER TO RESPOND TO ANY OTHER SUSPECTED GROWING AREAS OUTSIDE THE TRADITIONAL NORTHWESTERN ZONE. HE ALSO STRESSED THE VALUE OF THE WEEKLY ANALYTICAL SUMMARY AS A PLANNING TOOL FOR MORE EFFECTIVE SCHEDULING AND DEPLOYMENT OF THE SPRAY TASK FORCES.

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5. FPA AGUILAR CAUTIONED GUSS ON THE IMPORTANCE HE ATTACHED FOR THIS LARGE GROUP OF AMERICAN TECHNICIANS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS TO MAINTAIN A LOW PROFILE AND AVOID, TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, FRATERNIZING WITH THE LOCAL POPULACE. AGUILAR DESCRIBED THE CULIACAN AREA AS UNIQUE COMPARED TO OTHER ZONES HE HAD WORKED SINCE ONE MUST ALWAYS ASSUME THAT ANY PERSON MAY HAVE TIES WITH THE TRAFFICKERS,

EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY. HE INFORMED GUSS THAT THESE ARE SAME RULES HE APPLIES TO ALL AG OFFICE PERSONNEL ASSIGNED TO THIS CRITICAL ZONE; HOWEVER, HE ASSURED GUSS HIS OFFICE WILL PROVIDE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT DURING THE SETTLING DOWN PERIOD AND WILL ASSIST THEM IN ALL MATTERS DURING THEIR STAY IN CULIACAN.

6. PROJECT MANAGER GUSS SUMMED UP THE MEETINGS AS VERY SUCCESSFUL BASED ON HIS POSITIVE IMPRESSION OF AUTHORITIES' COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT MOPSS AND TO UTILIZE THE END PRODUCT EFFECTIVELY. ALTHOUGH WEATHER CONDITIONS MAY IMPEDE THE DESIRED FLOW OF OUTPUT, SDC FEELS THEY CAN SURMOUNT THIS SITUATION THROUGH METICULOUS FLIGHT MISSION PLANNING AND ORDER OF PRIORITIES.

7. FYI: THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ARE PROVIDED BASED ON GENERAL OBSERVATIONS AND CONVERSATIONS DURING THE COURSE OF VISITS TO THE AG AERO SERVICES AREA AT THE CULIACAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

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ACTION ARA-10

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R 242000Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6965

DEA HDQS WASHDC

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(A) AVIATION OPERATIONS: CAPT. CARLOS KAUFFMAN IS PERFORMING IN A PROFESSIONAL AND SERIOUS MANNER. HIS ENGLISH LANGUAGE ABILITY ENABLES HIM TO IMPART DIRECT ORDERS TO THE EHI PILOTS WITH A CONTINUOUS FEEDBACK ON THE SPRAYING OPERATIONS. NAU FOREIGN OFFICER OBSERVED LAUNCHING OPERATIONS PRIOR TO 0700 HRS. CAPT. LOMELI, WHO WAS THE CHIEF PILOT, APPEARS TO BE PEEVED AT THE AMERICAN PRESENCE AS HE MAY THINK THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS DEMOTION. NOTE: CAPT. KAUFFMAN IS NOW LOMELI'S SUPER-

VISOR.

(B) MAINTENANCE: THE FACILITIES ARE STILL VERY RUDIMENTARY; HOWEVER, MAINTENANCE AND AVIATION CREWS ARE ALL AWARE OF THE PLANS TO CONSTRUCT A PREFAB HANGAR AND ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS FACILITY. THE ROCKWELL INTERNATIONAL MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN, ROD STEPICH, JUDGED PROPER MAINTENANCE CANNOT BE PERFORMED WITH NO OVERHEAD COVER.

(C) MOPSS VANS. SDC TECHNICIANS INSPECTED THE TWO VANS, GENERATORS, AND ALL THE MAJOR EQUIPMENT AND CONCLUDED EVERYTHING WAS IN FAIR CONDITION. THEY JUDGED THAT A GOOD CLEANING WITH SOME MINOR ADJUSTMENTS WOULD RENDER THE EQUIPMENT COMPLETELY OPERATIONAL.

(D) TELECOMMUNICATIONS: TWO OF THE FIVE TELECOMMUNICATIONS TECHNICIANS, RECENTLY TRAINED AT SOUTHCOM, ARE NOW ASSIGNED TO CULIACAN. THEY HAVE ONLY HAND TOOLS AND BASIC TEST EQUIPMENT WITH NO ADEQUATE SPACE TO WORK. NOTE: THE PRESENT PLAN ON THE PREFAB HANGAR IS TO ALLOCATE ONE OF THE ADJACENT BUILDINGS FOR MAINTENANCE AND THE OPPOSIT SIDE FOR FLIGHT AND MOPSS OPERATIONS.

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(E) DEPLOYMENT OF FORCES: CAPT. TED LEOPOLD INFORMED THE PROGRAM OFFICER SOME OF THE SPRAY TASK FORCES WERE BEING DEPLOYED TO THE STATE OF GUERRERO TO COMMENCE SPRAYING OPERATIONS AGAINST CONFIRMED POPPY FIELDS IN THE ARCELIA ALTAMIRANO AREA.

COMMENT: RE TIMING OF SDC TEAM ARRIVAL: NOW THAT WE HAVE FORMAL AGREEMENT TO CONTRACT OPERATION OF ONE MOPSS SYSTEM, WE URGE THAT TEAM ARRIVE AND BEGIN WORK ASAP. WE CANNOT SAY FOR CERTAIN THAT POPPIES IN A DETECTABLE GROWTH STAGE ARE ALREADY PRESENT IN AREA TO BE COVERED BY SDC. PARA THREE ABOVE STATES, "THERE ARE NO CONFIRMED REPORTS OF POPPY FIELDS IN THE SOUTHERN SECTOR"; ON THE OTHER HAND, DEA HAS TWO COOPERATING INDIVIDUALS WHO REPORTED FIELDS 18 INCHES HIGH TEN DAYS AGO IN SAME AREA. WE MUST REMEMBER THAT IN MID-OCTOBER OF LAST YEAR, CONGRESSMAN RANGEL FOUND MATURE POPPIES IN THIS SAME AREA. IN ORDER TO PROTECT OUR INVESTMENT HERE (WHICH NOW EXCEEDS DOLS 40 MILLION), WE BELIEVE THE SOONER SDC BEGINS OPERATIONS THE BETTER. ANY DELAY NOW, IN ADDITION TO RISK OF MISSING EXISTING FIELDS, WOULD BE INEXPLICABLE TO GERTZ AND THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, WHO VIEW MOPSS WITH SOME SKEPTICISM AS A SYSTEM WHOSE WORTH IS YET TO BE ESTABLISHED. ON PURELY OPERATIONAL SIDE, WE WOULD EXPECT SDC TO OPERATE WITH LESS THAN FULL EFFICIENCY IN THE EARLY DAYS OF ITS CONTRACT, AND BELIEVE IT BENEFICIAL TO GET EARLY START SO THAT KINKS WILL BE IRONED OUT BEFORE CRITICAL STAGE OF PROGRAM REACHED. NAU PROGRAM OFFICER PLANS RETURN TRIP TO CULIACAN A WEEK PRIOR TO THE ARRIVAL OF THE SDC MAIN PARTY. CON-

TINUOUS CONTACT WILL BE MAINTAINED WITH AG MOPSS  
LIAISON OFFICER ZAPATA.  
JOVA

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